

# Conservation Connections

## Missouri Department of Conservation St. Louis Regional Newsletter



January 2010

## Discover Hunting: The Next Step

By Eric Edwards, Outdoor Education Center Supervisor August A. Busch Shooting Range

"So I got my Hunter Education certification, now how do I learn to hunt?" This is the question that more and more MDC staff are hearing from the public because many people don't have anyone in their family who hunts or does much of anything outdoors. When I was growing up all my family hunted—Grandpa, Dad, my uncles—and every single one of them was willing to take me under his wing and show me the ropes. As with most of us who started hunting at an early age, I can't remember just exactly how I learned what I know now. I do know that I always enjoyed the conversations at the hunting cabin, listening intently to the stories. As a kid who had a father who never stood for "foolishness," I always found it peculiar how my Dad's face would have a smile on it when we would first turn the beagles out of their boxes. Dogs were running everywhere, noses to the ground, and I couldn't figure it out. 'It's not like they're running anything,' I would think to myself. I kept saying I was ready to hunt by myself, and with time and persistence, eventually my mentors allowed me to venture out on my own. I soon realized, after many blown attempts at taking game, that I didn't know everything. Then those "stories" started coming back to me as I would have a similar situation arise... "keep the wind in your face" and "let em circle one more time". Now as a father of three, a husband and working a fulltime job, I understand why my father smiled at the sight of hounds running around doing their thing. I can't tell you how long it took for all of this to set in, but I now know that the "stories" weren't just stories, they were lessons. They weren't just about rabbit hunting; the stories were teaching me how to enjoy the entire hunt, not just how to take game.

The key to keeping this recreational pastime strong is to have well-informed, educated, and safe hunters. We are proving that Hunter Education works, thanks to the tireless efforts of many hunter education instructors. However, most of the next generation is several generations removed from the "farm." Not that long ago even if you lived in the city you had a relative that still lived on the family farm. Most of these people

hunted and always encouraged their "city relatives" to come out and go hunting. As more and more generations left the farm to move to more urban areas, this pastime was not being passed down to the next generations.

Back to the question "How do I learn to hunt?" People asking this question are not 12 or 16 years old, they are women and men in their mid-twenties up to their late thirties. When asked if they

know anyone who hunts, the response is usually "No." Based on the growing need for hunting instructions, the program *Discover Hunting* was developed.

The Missouri Department of Conservation is excited to announce the *Discover Hunting* series of programs. *Discover Hunting* programs are designed to help youth and adults experience the rich traditions of hunting through shooting skills classes and hunting clinics. These hands-on workshops build on the foundation of Hunter Education to create knowledgeable, responsible, and confident hunters ready to go afield for their first actual hunt. *Discover Hunting* programs also help you appreciate and respect the wildlife you harvest and the habitats that sustain them. *Discover Hunting* workshops may even inspire you to pay it forward, mentoring new hunters and sharing the joys of simply being outdoors in nature—even if the "big one" gets away.



Please look for the **DISCOVER HUNTING** logo or title in upcoming programs.

# Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

801 Strodtman Road, St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday - Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.;  
Saturday - Sunday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**For reservations call (314) 877- 6014 Wednesday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.;  
Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.** If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 north take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side.  
Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/)

## 9 Eagle Hike at North Riverfront Park

*Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon*

(All Ages) Winter is an excellent time in Missouri to see Bald Eagles gathered along areas of open water. North Riverfront Park along the Mississippi River is one of those areas. Located just south of the Chain of Rocks Bridge, the rock formations in the River keep the water from icing over, allowing the eagles to hunt for fish, their favorite food. Join us as we walk 2 miles along the paved Riverfront Trail searching for eagles with binoculars and spotting scopes. Don't forget to dress warmly! (Reservations begin December 26.)



## 23 – 24 Discover Nature – Women: Columbia Bottom Camp-In

*Saturday 5 p.m. – Sunday 10:30 a.m.*

(Ages 9 – 12 with an adult) Have you ever spent the night in an old barn? Here is your chance! That old barn is now our Visitor Center and it can be your home for a night. Join us as we cook a tasty dinner over a campfire then go on a night hike before we gather around to tell stories and sing songs around the fire ring. In the morning we will have activities and crafts all about Missouri wildlife in winter. This program will fulfill several components of Junior Girl Scout Badges. Bring your cot or mat and a sleeping bag and your favorite story or song to share around the campfire. (Reservations begin January 7.)



## 16 – 17 Eagle Days at the Columbia Bottom Confluence

*Saturday & Sunday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.*

(All Ages) So, you've visited the bridge this weekend and had a great time. What next? Take another look from a different vantage point. View eagles as they soar over the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Scopes will be set up to zoom in on a real live eagle's nest and also on these magnificent birds. There will be a warming tent set up. See you at the Confluence! (No reservations required.)



## 28 Celebrating Groundhog Day

*Thursday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.*

(Ages 3 – 6) Who knows if spring is coming early or not? Legend says the groundhog can predict the coming of spring. Explore the folklore that surrounds this mysterious animal.

Do a craft or two and have fun sharing and celebrating Groundhog Day. (Reservations begin January 14.)

## Forest Park Office

5595 Grand Drive, St. Louis, MO 63112 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## For reservations call (314) 877-1309 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Kingshighway north to West Pine Boulevard, turn left. Follow West Pine to Lindell, turn left onto Lindell. Continue on Lindell past Union Drive to Cricket, turn left. Take first available right onto Grand Drive. The Visitors Center is the tan brick, red tile-roofed building with arched windows, and a clock tower. It will be on the right side of the street. Free parking is available in the double lot to the left or on the street.

## 27 Animal Signs: Look Who Was Here!

*Wednesday 10 a.m. – Noon*

(Ages 5 – 10) Winter is a wonderful time to look for animal signs, if not in the snow then in wet mud. Let's take a short hike around Forest Park to look for tracks, scat, and more. You will be surprised at how much you can learn from these signs. Find a track? We'll learn what animal made it and where it was headed. Find some scat? What is scat by the way? So much information can be obtained from scat alone! Meet at the Dennis and Judith Jones Visitor & Education Center in Forest Park for this indoor/outdoor program. A take-home animal track is included! (Reservations begin January 6.)



# August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 2 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/)

### 9 Dresser Island Hike

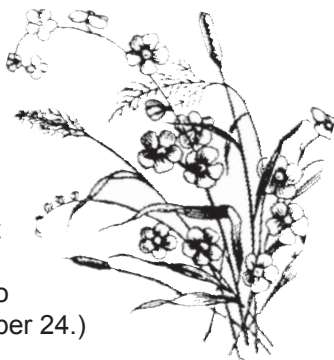
*Saturday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.*

(Adults) Where is there a place in winter that you can hike along a big river and see pelicans, ducks, eagles, hawks, gulls, herons, turkey, deer, muskrat houses, beaver lodges, many small birds, and possibly trumpeter swans? It all sounds impossible, but it's right in your backyard at Dresser Island Conservation Area near West Alton in St. Charles County. Join this 6 ½ mile hike along the Mississippi River to enjoy the winter and wildlife scenery. (Reservations begin December 24.)

### 9 What's in a Name?

*Saturday 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.*

(Ages 6 – 12) Enjoy a slideshow of drawings of Missouri wildflowers and play a game to sharpen your identification skills. This is a perfect chance to fight the cold and think of warm spring and summer days to come. (Reservations begin December 24.)



### 13 Winter Gifts for the Birds

*Wednesday 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.*



(Ages 6 – 10) Just because the holidays are over doesn't mean you have to stop giving gifts! Join us as we hand-craft several tasty gifts for the birds. Use them to decorate your backyard and watch as your feathered friends enjoy a scrumptious meal. (Reservations begin December 30.)

### 22 Nutty Squirrels

*Friday 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.*

(Ages 3 – 6) Is cabin fever driving you nuts? Then grab your squirrely little ones and bring them to learn about Missouri's frisky squirrels. We will experience the true nature of squirrels as we explore their wild habitat and make them a take-home treat. (Reservations begin January 8.)



## Eagle Days at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge

*Saturday & Sunday, January 16 & 17*

*9 a.m. – 3 p.m. each day*

It's time again to bundle up your family and join the excitement of viewing eagles along the Mississippi River from the historic Chain of Rocks Bridge. Viewing scopes will be stationed on the Bridge to allow close-ups of eagles. Historic re-enactors will interact with the public and acquaint visitors with aspects of Lewis & Clark's 1804-06 expedition the Corps of Discovery. Educational displays at the Illinois entrance include a replica of the boat used by the Corps of Discovery. Get your photo taken in the replica of an eagle's nest! Bring your binoculars and dress to stay warm. Please do not bring your pets.

This year we will also have a nature photography presentation by Danny Brown on Saturday, January 16 from 9 – 9:45 a.m.



Danny's photographs have been featured in the Missouri Department of Conservation's Natural Events Calendar. On both days, World Bird Sanctuary will present an educational eagle program with a live eagle every 20 minutes beginning at 10 a.m. The last presentation will begin at 2:40 p.m.

Free parking is available at the St. Louis Welcome Center at Riverview and I-270 and at North Riverfront Park, off of Riverview, south of the waterworks. A free shuttle will be available from both locations. Parking at the Missouri Bridge entrance is \$5. Free parking is available at the Illinois Bridge entrance. Note: most of the programming is at the Missouri Bridge entrance and in the middle of the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. Questions? Call Trailnet at (314) 416-0030.



# Rockwoods Reservation

2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/)

### 6 Maple Sugar Tree Tapping

Wednesday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

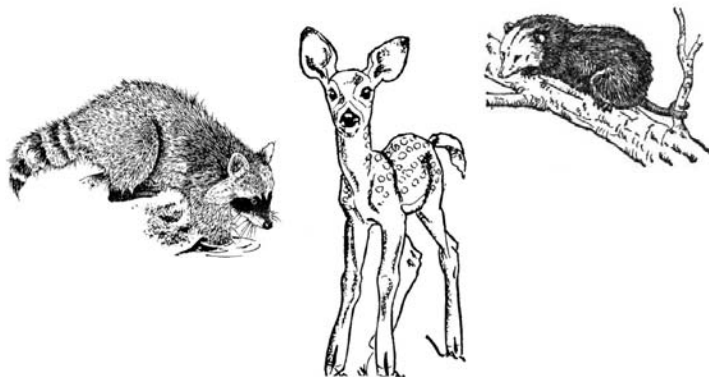
(Ages 7 & up) Maple sugar season is almost upon us and it's time to tap the maple trees! In this program we will cover the basics of tapping trees, what equipment to use, maple tree identification and more. We will not cover how to make maple syrup, so be sure to check out February programs for that sweet treat. Please dress for the weather because a majority of this program is outside. (Reservations begin December 23.)



### 12 Missouri Mammals

Tuesday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

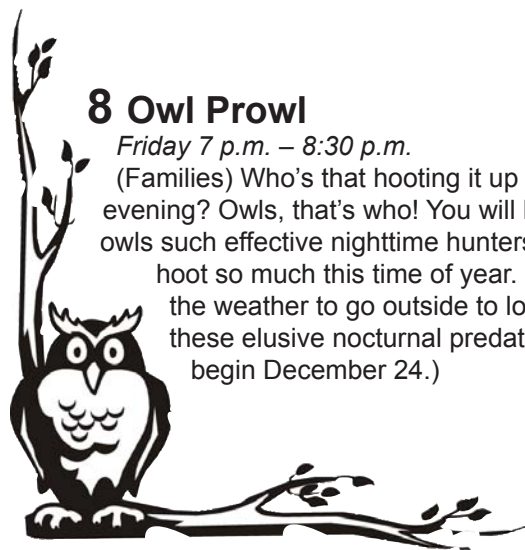
(Ages 7 & up) Which animals' feet are similar to human feet? Is there really a venomous mammal? Join us to learn the answers to these and many other questions as we discover Missouri's mammals. We will take an up-close look at mammal furs and tracks and venture outdoors to look for signs of wildlife. Please dress for the weather. (Reservations begin December 29.)



### 8 Owl Prowl

Friday 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Families) Who's that hooting it up each January evening? Owls, that's who! You will learn what makes owls such effective nighttime hunters and why they hoot so much this time of year. Please dress for the weather to go outside to look and listen for these elusive nocturnal predators. (Reservations begin December 24.)



### 23 Rock Quarry Trail in Winter

Saturday 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(Families with children ages 8 & up) Much more can be seen of nature in winter when the leaves are gone. Join us for an exciting adventure on one of our best trails to inspire your naturalist curiosity. There's no telling what we may discover. (Reservations begin January 8.)

MDC  
**DISCOVER**  
**nature**  
FAMILIES

## Save the Date!

### Saturday, February 6 – Maple Sugar Festival

Mark your calendars today for the Maple Sugar Festival at Rockwoods Reservation on Saturday, February 6. You'll learn the art and skill of tapping trees, collecting and boiling sap, to making tasty treats from the trees in your very own yard!

This is a **FREE EVENT** for all ages. Look for more information in your February edition of *Conservation Connections*.



# Busch Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304

Hours are: December 1 - March 31 open Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

April 1 - November 30 open Monday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Tuesday from 2 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Closed all State and Federal Holidays.

## For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 5 miles. The area entrance is on the south side of Hwy D. Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/busch/>

## 7 & 9 Discover Hunting: Youth Pheasant Clinic / Hunt

Thursday 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. & Saturday 7 a.m. – 10 a.m.

(Ages 11 – 16) This is a great opportunity for young hunters to learn proper techniques and safety of pheasant hunting and to improve their hunting skills. The first part of the program will be in the classroom and we will discuss habitat, different firearms, clothing, hunting techniques and safety. Youth must attend the clinic

to be in the hunt and must be Hunter Education Certified.

The clinic will be held on January 7 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in

the classrooms at Busch Conservation Area

Headquarters. The hunt will be at Busch

Shooting Range on January 9 from 7 a.m. to

10 a.m. (Reservations begin December 7.)



## 12 Discover Hunting: Predator Hunting

Tuesday 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

(All Ages) Need a challenge? Hunt higher up on the food chain. You will learn different techniques for hunting these types of animals. We will discuss calls, set ups, firearms, and clothing. The class will be held in the classrooms at Busch Conservation Area Headquarters. (Reservations begin December 13.)

## 14 & 16 Basic Handgun

Thursday 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. & Saturday 8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

(Ages 11 & up) This program is designed to teach how to safely and successfully handle and shoot a handgun. We will cover topics such as various actions, calibers, grip, stance, sight picture, and safety. The first part of the class will be held in the classrooms at Busch Conservation Area Headquarters on Thursday then we will go to the Busch Shooting Range Saturday morning for some hands-on experience. You can bring your own equipment or use ours. (Reservations begin December 15.)

## 21 & 23 Discover Hunting: Youth Rabbit Clinic/Hunt

Thursday 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. & Saturday 7 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

(Ages 11 – 15) Join us to learn tips and techniques of rabbit hunting. We will cover habitat, firearms, safety, and hunting with or without dogs. Then participate in a hunt. You must attend the clinic to participate in the hunt and be Hunter Education Certified. The clinic will be held in the classrooms at Busch Conservation Area Headquarters. The hunt will be held at Busch Conservation Area. (Reservations begin December 22.)



## NEW HOURS for the Busch Shooting Range

As many of you know the Busch Shooting range installed lights on all of its ranges about three years ago. This was to provide more opportunities for people who could not come on the weekends or on weekdays after work before the range closed for the day. For the past couple of years the range has been open late on Tuesdays from 2 p.m. until 8 p.m. year-round.

As of December 1, 2009, the Busch Shooting Range will change its hours as follows:

December 1 through March 31 we will be open Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

April 1 through November 30 we will be open Monday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., and Tuesday from 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.

For a complete listing of all Hunter Education and Bowhunter Education classes throughout the region, visit the web at [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis) and click on the "Hunter Education" link on the left of the page.

# Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

1100 Antire Road, High Ridge, MO 63049

Range Hours: May 1 - August 31: Wednesday 2 p.m. - 8 p.m., Thursday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

September 1 - April 30: Wednesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays and all State and Federal Holidays.

## For reservations call (636) 938-9548 Wednesday through Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From the east/St. Louis: I-44 west to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Left over I-44 to Antire Road. Right on Antire road. One hundred feet to entrance. Left into driveway. From the west/Eureka: I-44 east to Beaumont/Antire Road, exit 269. Follow exit lane around to top.

Visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges/>

## 6 Home Firearm Safety

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 11 & up) This is a basic course on the rules for safe gun handling. We will identify various types of firearms and ammunition and how they function. Instruction on cleaning and safe storage is also emphasized in this course. We'll take a look at the NRA Eddie Eagle® safety program for kids. This is a good place to start if you are a new gun owner, or just interested in firearms. (Reservations begin December 6.)



## 14 Introduction to Handguns

Thursday 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 16 & up) Join us for a hands-on look at various types of handguns. We'll provide examples to examine and learn the working mechanisms of revolvers, semi-automatics, and some others. We'll discuss caliber and ammunition selection. This course is a good opportunity to "decide before you buy." There is no range time involved in this introductory program. (Reservations begin December 14.)

## 20 Reloading for Handguns

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(Ages 15 & up) This is a specialized course on handloading for pistols and revolvers, especially straight wall cases. We'll demonstrate actual loading techniques and discuss appropriate reloading equipment and sources of components. Class limit is 12. (Reservations begin December 20.)

**NOTICE:** The rifle/pistol range is currently closed and under construction. All other ranges are still open. We expect to reopen the rifle/pistol range by September 1, 2010. Progress reports will be included over the next several months including a reopen date.

If you would like more information please visit our website at [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges) or call the range office at 636-938-9548.



# Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 Nature Center hours are daily 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## 7 Winter Adaptations

Thursday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Families with children ages 7 & up) Have you ever wondered how Missouri's animals respond to cold weather? Come learn about some of the different strategies used to survive the harsh conditions of winter. Discover how monarch butterflies make an amazing migration and find out if bears really hibernate. This program will focus on adaptations that make it possible for Missouri's animals and insects to live through the winter. (Reservations begin December 22.)

## 13 Discover Nature – Women: “Show Me” Quilts

Wednesday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

(Ages 14 & up) Sew it and show it in the true “Show Me” state fashion! Spend the afternoon exploring a few of Missouri's state symbols with a focus on the state aquatic animal of Missouri, the paddlefish. The list of items you need to bring will be sent to you after registration.

Experienced and inexperienced quilters are all encouraged to attend. Sewing machine demonstrations will be done in class.

This will be the third of the four-part series. It is not required that you attend the first and second class to enjoy the third and fourth class. Please take note, third class will be held at Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center. The fourth class will be held at Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park. Participants under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. (Reservations begin December 29.)

## 14 Nature's Niche: Breakfast with the Birds

Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

(Ages 50 & up) On a cold winter's morning there is nothing like having a breakfast of black oil sunflower seeds, or maybe a hot cup of coffee and a sweet roll. That would, of course, depend upon whether you are a bird or a human. So, while the birds feed outside, we'll enjoy the coffee and sweet rolls inside. We'll identify the birds and watch their behavior from the comfort of the viewing windows. After that, weather permitting,

a short bird walk

on Tanglevine Trail will feel good.  
(Reservations begin December 29.)



## 22 A Blanket of Leaves

Friday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 3 – 6) It's January—GO OUTSIDE! Your nose may turn pink from the cold, your breath may hang in the air, and your ears will hear the crunching of a blanket of leaves on the forest floor. That is the sound of adventure! Bring your favorite blanket and snuggle up as you discover why leaves are a favorite blanket for some of Missouri's wildlife. Dress for the weather; a portion of the program will take place outside. (Reservations begin January 7.)



## 27 Meet the Feet

Wednesday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 7 – 12) Feet are one of the most interesting and awesome adaptations in the animal world! We'll explore many different kinds of feet as we learn about their uses, and then we'll take a hike to look for tracks in the wild. Please dress for the weather. (Reservations begin January 12.)

## Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

January 2010

**For reservations call (314) 301-1500 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 east to Kirkwood, take S. Kirkwood Road (Route 61/67). Follow Route 61/67 to Watson Road. Go west on Watson Road to Geyer Road. Go north on Geyer Road 200 yards to Cragwold Road. Go 1 mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/)

### 29 An Evening with Raptors

Friday 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

(All Ages) Join us as we welcome back a group of licensed

Missouri Falconers and their hunting partners! There will be a brief program in the auditorium followed by an up-close and personal "meet and greet" in the classrooms.

**Reservations are required.**

(Reservations begin January 12.)



#### Volunteer Milestones

Bob Anderson 4000 hours  
David Anderson 500 hours  
Ginny Bilbro 100 hours  
Jennifer Bollinger 100 hours  
John Sanders 100 hours

### Nature Films!

Powder Valley shows nature films most weekends. They are shown in the auditorium and are free of charge. No reservations are required and groups are welcome! Please call for specific program dates and listings: (314) 301-1500.

Children's films are shown 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Family films are shown 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## January Hallway Exhibit

### 2009 Mingo Swamp Flora & Fauna Photography Contest

The winners of the 2009 Mingo Swamp Flora & Fauna Photography Contest are on display in the Hallway Exhibit during the month of January. The nature and wildlife photography contest is sponsored each year by Drury Inn Southwest of Cape Girardeau, Missouri. With 181 entries, the contest featured photographs of diverse subject matter with entries representing many categories: people in nature, native plants, native wildlife, artistic enhancement, and landscapes of Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. This year's winner of Best of Show was a photograph of a green tree frog entitled, "Swamp Eye," by Chad Doolen of Patterson, Missouri. The Alternate Best of Show winner was Tom Neumeyer of Cape Girardeau, Missouri with his photograph of a southern blue flag iris, entitled "Shades of Blue." The Best of Show prize is \$250 with winning photographers receiving cash prizes and ribbons in all categories.



The 2009 Mingo Swamp Flora & Fauna Photography Contest event awards prizes in two divisions and five categories, including native wildlife, native plants, Mingo landscapes, people in nature, and artistically enhanced. Two of the categories, Mingo landscapes and people in nature, must be taken on Mingo National Wildlife Refuge. Entries in the other categories are open to photographs of indigenous wildlife or plants taken off-refuge. The refuge welcomes entries from all age groups and skill levels from children to adult and amateur to professional.

For more information about the contest, telephone the Mingo National Wildlife Refuge at 573-222-3589.







## Conservation Connections

Missouri Department of Conservation  
11715 Cragwold Road  
Kirkwood, MO 63122  
[www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov)

PRSRT STD.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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PERMIT 274

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Sign up to receive a direct link on-line to **Conservation Connections** by visiting [www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/) and entering your e-mail address.

## I resolve . . .

Yes, it's the beginning of a New Year and the time when many of us make New Year's Resolutions. May we suggest that you consider making a resolution that is easy, fun, healthy, and rejuvenating? How about joining us in resolving to **DISCOVER NATURE?** The opportunities to **DISCOVER NATURE** in Missouri are as varied as the people who live and visit here. If you already spend time outdoors, this would be a great time to explore a new hobby or invite a friend or family member to join you as you enjoy the outdoors.

### Have you tried?

Hiking  
Hunting  
Bird watching  
Nature journaling  
Fishing  
Outdoor photography  
Learning and identifying Missouri's wildflowers, butterflies, insects



Long, thoughtful walks  
Target practice  
Sketching and Painting  
Archery  
Spelunking  
Letter Boxing  
Geocaching

If you want some company for your favorite activities, or aren't sure how to get started, look inside for the DISCOVER NATURE logos. We can help you begin a new hobby or rediscover an old one, all in the presence of friends, family, and people with similar interests. So make a new year's resolution you just can't fail with...DISCOVER NATURE!

# *Conservation Connections Featured Area*

## **Upper Mississippi Conservation Area**

Upper Mississippi Conservation Area is stretched along the Mississippi River from West Alton to Canton Missouri. This area consists of 87 scattered tracts adjacent to the Mississippi River and some river islands. Counties: Lewis, Marion, Ralls, Saint Charles, Lincoln, and Pike

These tracts are mostly forest along with old fields and wetlands. The area contains more than 100 waterfowl blinds and Westport Island Natural Area, which is a bottomland wet-mesic forest.

The Upper Mississippi Conservation Area, rich in wildlife and habitat diversity, stretches from the Mel Price lock and dam at Alton, Illinois, to LaGrange, Missouri. It is composed of 87 tracts of federal lands totaling over 11,000 acres and managed under a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Accumulating silt reduced the productivity of this wetland area, and navigation and recreational boating helped move bottom sediments into backwaters and chutes, reducing the number of wetland habitat.

In an effort to balance navigation needs and the need for wildlife habitat, Congress authorized the Environmental Management Program in 1986. This federal program is designed to protect the resources and guide future river management. One of the elements of this program was the construction of Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects.

Many people visit the riverine area to enjoy the outdoors, hunt and hike on the new sediment deflection levee, or fish below the water control structures.

### **Recreational Opportunities**

Bird Watching - Fishing - Hiking

Hunting - Outdoor Photography - Wildlife Viewing

# Conservation Connections



Please check our website for other Eagle Days in Missouri. If you can't make it to an Eagle Days event, look for eagles in the wild at one of the locations listed below. From late December through early February, watch for eagles perched in large trees along the water's edge. View early in the morning to see the eagles flying and fishing.

**Lake of the Ozarks Bagnell Dam Access**

East of Bagnell

**Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area**

Route K, southwest of Columbia

**Lock & Dam 24**

Clarksville

**Lock & Dam 25**

East of Winfield

**Mingo National Wildlife Refuge**

Northwest of Puxico

**Old Chain of Rocks Bridge**

South of I-270, off Riverview Drive, St. Louis

**Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary**

East of West Alton

**Schell-Osage Conservation Area**

North of El Dorado Springs

**Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge**

South of Mound City

**Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge**

South of Sumner

**Table Rock Lake &****Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery**

Southwest of Branson

**Truman Reservoir**

West of Warsaw



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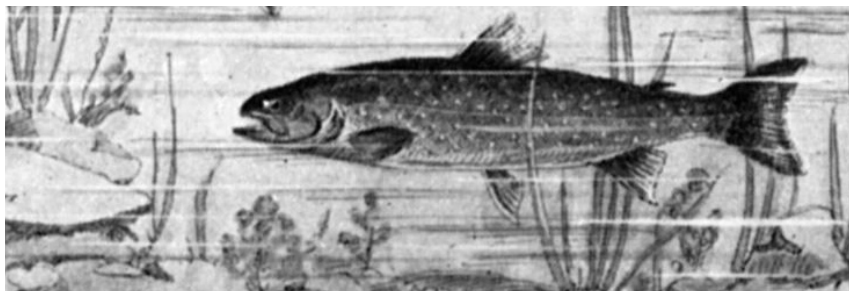
## WINTER TROUT FISHING AT JEFFERSON LAKE IN FOREST PARK

Whether you're a seasoned angler or a first-time fisher, you can find good winter trout fishing at the 9 acre Jefferson Lake in Forest Park. The lake is catch-and-release only from November 1 to January 31—this means you can't take your catch home to eat. You must also use only artificial lures (no live bait). Beginning February 1, you can catch and keep the trout, and use any bait or lure. The daily limit is four fish. Get a trout permit (\$7, good for an entire year) and, a fishing permit if you're 16 to 64 years old.

Don't worry about gear—a simple, inexpensive rod and reel and a few artificial lures will do.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Experiment and visit with other anglers who are having success.
- Trout often strike lightly, so keep your line tight and use light line - 4-pound test or less - for the best results.
- Drift or very slowly retrieve a small jig or fly under a tiny bobber or strike indicator.
- Be ready to set your hook at the slightest twitch of the line.



For more information on Missouri trout fishing visit <http://www.mdc.mo.gov/fish/sport/trout/>